



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

New Directions In Routing, Plumbing and Lighting

By R. C. Binstock

Noe Valley often seems more like an isolated village than part of a bustling metropolis. The pace of life can be slow, and there are no towering skyscrapers to remind us that we're in the very center of a big city. Like the rest of that city, however, we're sometimes touched by the problems of urban existence. Fortunately, San Francisco's Public Works Department usually has the situation well in hand.

We don't have the congested streets of some areas, but once in a while action must be taken to keep traffic under control. This month, a traffic-related change on 23rd Street may be finalized. Residents of the block of 23rd between Chattanooga and Church Streets, annoyed by the noise of cars and trucks struggling uphill, sent a petition to the PWD's Traffic Engineering division. They asked that their block be made one way eastbound in order to limit traffic to the downhill direction, create a safer stretch of street, and eliminate the automotive groaning and grinding that has been disturbing the peace.

An April 6 hearing was set to discuss the proposal. "We considered it a purely local matter," said Gordon Hansen of the



Photo by Joel Abramson

Although Noe Valley is plenty colorful, it so far lacks the orange glow cast by the sodium streetlights downtown. But public works are changing the face of the neighborhood, and not everybody's smiling.

PWD. "It isn't a major street." And since no one showed up to object, the measure was endorsed and passed on to the Traffic Committee of the board of supervisors. That group meets once a month; it will consider the petition on May 17 at the earliest. For more information, contact City Hall.

New Pipes and Pavement for Guerrero

Of course, streets as well as humans take abuse from the traffic. Not long ago, the PWD's Streets and Highways division announced that major road renovation and repair would take place throughout San Francisco this summer. While much of the work was sorely needed anyway, the immediate motive was most

likely the impending Democratic Convention.

Among others, Guerrero Street will get a long-overdue facelift. Those who have chipped a tooth or ruined a suspension while traveling it will welcome the improvement, in spite of the inconvenience. Right now, the Water Department is digging up Guerrero, replacing mains and other pipes before the asphalt spreaders move in.

This might seem like double punishment, but Vitaly Troyan of Streets and Highways explains that the utility people have no choice. When Public Works repairs a street, a moratorium on utility work follows, lasting up to five years.

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A Free Ride for Arlo

By Ann Rovere

Arlo, a handsome and spirited Shetland sheepdog, rolls out of his upper Noe Street flat in his wheelchair at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. everyday. Right behind and guiding him is Felice Kaplan, his devoted owner. In recent months the two have become local neighborhood figures, arousing curiosity and sympathy, Arlo for his strange affliction and Kaplan for her fortitude, perseverance and patience.

No, Arlo doesn't ride in a wheelchair because he's lazy or pampered. The poor dog simply has arthritis, causing partial paralysis of his hind legs. Kaplan's veterinarian suggested the wheelchair as a novel solution to Arlo's mobility problem and a humane alternative to surgery or euthanasia.

Because Arlo still has the use of his front legs, he fits well into his K9 Cart, the trade name for his wheelchair. A strap fits under his torso, while his rear legs are suspended and held in place by stirrups. His front legs move normally and wheels replace the motion of his hind legs.

The sight of this unusual contraption has generally stirred a friendly and helpful response from the community, says Kaplan. One neighbor offered Arlo a bottle of DMSO, a solvent for the treatment of arthritis, while another suggested acupuncture. When Arlo takes his walk, people watch from the windows of their homes and wave from their cars, but some wait a long time before asking Kaplan about the cart. One woman was



Photo by Joel Abramson

Life on Noe Street just rolls along for Arlo, a Shetland sheepdog afflicted with arthritis. The furry freewheeler still requires careful attention from his owner, Felice Kaplan.

quite suspicious that the wheelchair might be a torture instrument. She asked Kaplan if it helped Arlo, adding, "You just never know, you read about so many things these days."

Arlo's adjustment to his wheelchair was not immediate. He first had to conquer the instinct to go backwards, which presented some suspenseful moments on the hills. Kaplan says he learned the forward motion after a few days, but still does not realize the breadth or height of his machine. He can get caught on car bumpers, in narrow doorways, and on woodwork. It takes constant vigilance on Kaplan's part to avoid a wreck.

Kaplan is careful to tell dog owners who are considering use of a wheelchair that it takes serious commitment to take

care of an aged and sick animal. Arlo is utterly dependent on the family inside the home. He must be picked up and transported wherever he goes. Kaplan considers Arlo a family member, and realizes that, as with any infirm relative with a good spirit, you have to make sacrifices.

As for Arlo, except for a two-week period of being housebound and frightened, he now hardly knows the difference between walking and riding. Still alive with the drive to terrorize the cats and dogs of the neighborhood, he is ready to take off in a flash. Acclimated totally to his wheelchair and to all the attention that goes with it, life remains the same feast to Arlo as it was before his illness. □

Last Course For a Lean Little Italy

By Jeff Kaliss

In the early afternoon these days, Little Italy co-owner Jack Kreitzman sets up his office—on a small table next to the kitchen. Delivery people still bring in crates full of fresh, top quality produce, and the phone still rings with customers wanting dibs on a table for the evening meal.

But Kreitzman feels depressed as he looks around the interior of the 24th Street eatery which he opened with Mel Lefer live years ago. Gone are the tables from the front section, which is now a waiting area. The tables in back have been reduced to the point that Kreitzman can only accept reservations for parties of four to six diners, and then only up to a fraction of his former business. "We're turning away more than 70 people each weekday night and 150 on weekends," he grieves, banging his fist against the wall which separates the restaurant from the nail salon next door. "If I could have gone through this wall," he says bitterly, "none of this would have happened. Noe Valley has not been very good to me."

Recipe for Frustration

Kreitzman is referring to Little Italy's attempt two years ago to expand into the then-empty space now occupied by Fancy Fingers manicurists. The expansion was blocked by the Friends of Noe Valley and other residential advocates who complained to City Hall that there was already too much restaurant and bar activity along the neighborhood's commercial strip.

As a result, Kreitzman and Lefer were denied a special use permit and were forced to confine their burgeoning business in their present space. (Because Little Italy only has a single front exit, it falls into the city's F-2 classification, limiting occupancy to 49 persons.) Even when seats were added beyond this limit, customers sometimes had to wait more than an hour in cramped quarters.

The situation began to ferment a year ago. Under pressure from the fire department, Lefer pulled out some tables and cut back the size of his staff, only to find himself confronting a picket line composed of laid-off workers, sympathizers, and professional organizers from Local 2 of the Hotel & Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Union. The chanting pickets accused the owners of retaliating against union supporters, and they affirmed the employees' intent to improve their working conditions by affiliating with the local.

Despite his fear that unionization would "change the atmosphere," Lefer restored the lost jobs and sat down at the bargaining table. By the end of the summer, labor and management had hammered out a mutually acceptable contract, and for a few months the only noise came from the ever-crowded hut well-fed customers.

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• New Directions •

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The Water Department, hearing that Guerrero was on the PWD list, checked its own agenda and discovered repairs that couldn't wait. "We try to talk back and forth," says Troyan. "We don't want to leave them in a difficult position."

Once the water work is completed, the road repair contract will be advertised. While parts of the street need only a new surface, others are more seriously damaged and will undergo extensive reconstruction. To minimize disruption of traffic flow, Troyan promises that "more of the road will be taken up during off-peak hours than during rush hours." Still, wise drivers might want to avoid Guerrero for the several months the work will require.

An Amber Shade of Pale

Do you ever get the feeling, while walking downtown at night, that you've mysteriously acquired a tan? That could be because most of San Francisco's old white streetlights have gradually been replaced by the newer orange type. Some people like the way the newcomers eliminate shadows; others think their strange hue robs the streets of color.

Joe DeGraca, who is in charge of the city's ongoing streetlight conversion project, says the orange high-pressure sodium lamps provide more light at a far lower cost than the older mercury vapor variety. Actually, the mercury lights are fairly new themselves. Until 1965, yellowish incandescent bulbs lit the streets of every city and town in America. In that year, public works departments everywhere, including San Francisco, started installing new poles with mercury lamps. This involved considerable trouble and expense, as the old high-voltage wiring had to be replaced along with the lamps themselves.



IF YOU ASK ME, THIS SOFTWARE CRAZE HAS GONE TOO FAR.

Before all of the incandescents had been changed, sodium lamps were invented. In 1970, the city began to replace both incandescent and mercury vapor lights with sodium. It was slow going at first, but the energy crisis of 1973 made installation of the more efficient lights a high priority. Since the mercury-to-sodium transformation involves no wiring change, it's easier and cheaper than incandescent-to-sodium. A project converting 10,000 city-owned mercury lights was recently completed. The city is now replacing its remaining 100 to 200 incandescents.

But only about half of San Francisco's streetlights are owned by the city. The others belong to PG&E, which charges an ownership and maintenance fee for each light. It isn't hard to tell which light is owned by whom. The city lights are generally mounted on their own poles, whereas the PG&E lights are attached to telephone and other wooden poles, usually amidst a tangle of overhead wiring. Nearly all of the lights in Noe Valley are PG&E lights, and therefore won't be

converted to sodium in the near future.

PG&E, the White Knight

PG&E's fees vary with the type of lamp involved, and they want more for sodium than for mercury. DeGraca explains that even with the reduced energy expenditure, the higher charges would make conversion of PG&E's mercury lamps uneconomical.

Other California cities have already converted their PG&E lights, but San Francisco, unlike the others, provides the electricity for PG&E as well as city-owned lights. Since PG&E has nothing to gain from decreasing the power consumption of its lights, it's reluctant to invest any capital in them. If the city wants them changed, the city will have to pay.

Public Works takes every opportunity to install its own lights in PG&E territory. Thanks to the new electric buses on the 24-Divisadero line, parts of Castro, 26th, and Noe Streets are becoming the only sodium-lit sections of Noe Valley. Because the trolley wires were being put in, it became worth the city's while to include new lights and poles in the package.

South of Army Street, Noe Street has already gone orange, while work along the rest of the trolley route has been delayed by contract difficulties. As alert observers have noted, however, city poles have already been erected on the segments north of Army; the "No Parking" notices that began appearing along Castro in mid-April also herald completion of the changeover.

If you don't like the sodium lights, take heart—the rest of Noe Valley will be white, not orange, for the foreseeable future. Unless PG&E changes its tune, or the cost of electricity skyrockets again, mercury vapor will remain the name of the game. □



Photo by Joel Abramson

Guerrero Street has been a lot of fun lately, what with all the trucks and bulldozers churning up the road to install new water pipes. The next couple of months should be even more exciting—the entire street will be repaved.



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The Noe Valley Voice is an independent newspaper published monthly except in January and August. It is distributed free in Noe Valley and vicinity. Mail subscriptions are available at a cost of \$10/year (\$5/year for seniors). The Noe Valley Voice is a member of Media Alliance and Artists in Print.

Editorial: 821-3324 (PM)
Distribution: 861-5770
Display Advertising only:
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Advertising Deadline for June 1984 issue: May 20
Editorial Deadline: May 15
Class Ads: See Page 19

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Letters

Solving the Palm Mystery

EDITOR:

I recall reading somewhere that the Dolores palms were planted by the missionaries. Disappointed by the cool climate, they planted the palms to remind them of the tropical climate they had come from. I might have read it in one of Margot Doss Patterson's books. Hope this helps.

Rhoda Asnien
Folsom Street

EDITOR:

According to *Architecture San Francisco* by Sally and John Woodbridge, John McLaren, main creator of Golden Gate Park, planted the palms along Dolores after the earthquake.

Phoebe Cutler
30th Street

Editor's Note: Last month's story on Dolores Street's majestic palms turned up these two suggestions from readers as to the trees' origin. In hopes of clearing up the mystery, the Voice consulted our former "Artifacts" columnist and local historian Judith Lynch.

Lynch sides with Phoebe Cutler on this issue. She said she'd read that McLaren planted the trees after the earthquake and fire to create a fire break. As noted in last month's story, each segment of the Dolores Street dividers has an underground cistern. McLaren was not above using the trees for promotional purposes, she added. "McLaren actually boxed them up and moved them to the Marina for the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition."

Demos Dig in Neighborhood Grass Roots

By R. C. Binstock

Does it seem as though nobody cares what you think? Have you given up on finding an audience for your monologues? If so, plan to take advantage of the weeks before the California presidential primary on June 5. During that time, the people working for the three Democratic candidates will take a profound interest in your preferences.

All three campaigns regard Noe Valley as wide-open territory; representatives of each are optimistic about their chances on 24th Street. While the local organizations are just getting started, they all plan to pay careful attention to the voters of Noe Valley and the neighborhoods around it.

Richard Lapping, Noe Valley coordinator for Americans for Hart, is an attorney who's lived on 24th Street for about six months. This is his first extensive foray into a political campaign. He says he was tired of "just voting against someone" and that Gary Hart's candidacy inspired him to action. He got involved through a friend who took him to a Valentine's Day fundraiser for the Colorado senator.

"We want to expand the campaign into as many different neighborhoods as possible," he says. A recent series of meetings in Noe Valley, Glen Park, and Bernal Heights has served to attract potential Hart troops and get them assigned to specific tasks. Names and addresses of people in the area who have contacted the campaign's San Francisco headquarters are passed along as they come in.

Jack Trujillo is secretary of the California Democratic Party and a member of Walter Mondale's Steering Committee. A word-processing supervisor who's currently looking for work, Trujillo knows the ins and outs of Noe Valley as well as the Democratic Party—he used to live on 26th Street and now resides in the North of Market area.

The Mondale campaign, like the others, is just starting to get into gear on a local level, and is currently holding meetings to identify volunteers and incorporate them into the organization. While there's no Noe Valley coordinator yet, Trujillo is one of those responsible for a larger area that also includes Eureka Valley and Twin Peaks. He says that an effort is being made to keep people working in their own neighborhoods whenever possible.

Jesse Jackson's organization, also holding local meetings and forming neighborhood groups, has divided California into congressional districts. Enos Baker is a member of the team running the campaign in the 5th district, which includes the Mission, Bernal Heights, Glen Park, and other neighborhoods as well as Noe Valley. A technical writer who also has previous political experience, he's a veteran of Ron Dellums' 1970 campaign, and did some precinct walking for the Republicans back in the 1960s, when that party "still had a substantial moderate component."

In addition to his 5th district role, Baker is the Diamond Heights coordinator for Jackson. He explains that "the



Photo by Martin Klimek

Hart volunteers reach out to sway the Democratic vote near the breadbasket of Yuppie culture, in front of Bell Market.

transition from a general campaign to a district-by-district approach" has taken some effort but is nearly finished. Gene Royale, in charge of the 5th district overall for Jackson, says the organization intends to build "a community army of people and agencies."

How does Noe Valley stack up for potential votes? "We think we'll do very well," says Mondale's Trujillo. "There's a perception of Noe Valley as Yuppie Heaven, but the neighborhood has a lot of long-term residents and a high proportion of home ownership."

He feels that these characteristics favor Mondale, and that his campaign has the experience to take advantage of them. "We're going to push hard," he says.

Baker finds the liberal voting patterns displayed by Noe Valley residents in past elections encouraging. Statistics on ballot items like Propositions N (El Salvador) and O (bilingual ballots) indicate support for his candidate's positions, he says. "In general, the 5th has all the demographics that make it a high priority for Jackson." Baker also notes that people working in voter registration drives have reported favorable local attitudes towards Jackson's candidacy.

One common observation is that Noe Valley is a politically aware place. Lapping thinks this will work to Hart's advantage. He agrees that liberal voting patterns are significant. So far, he reports, the response to Hart has been good. "A lot of people are enthusiastic," he says. While he sees Noe Valley as a complex and varied neighborhood, he feels that Hart has wide appeal that goes beyond age and economic status.

The three organizations share some basic philosophies on campaign technique. A serious "get out the vote" effort figures prominently in everyone's plans. Baker is in charge of that leg of the Jackson campaign for the entire 5th district, and acknowledges that it's an important responsibility. Lapping describes his organization's focus as "a traditional electoral effort—getting out the vote on

Election Day." The Mondale campaign is also pursuing this goal. "A major thrust will be identifying Mondale voters and getting them out," explains Trujillo.

Door-to-door canvassing, on the other hand, doesn't seem to be as high a priority. Trujillo says that while plans call for some house-to-house work, volunteers will be dropping literature rather than making extended visits. Some canvassing for Jackson is a possibility, according to Baker, but leafleting will be more common. Lapping notes that "it's not clear whether the door-to-door approach really works."

The Hart campaign has gotten a head start on the others in one respect: since mid-April, Hart volunteers and their table of literature have been a weekend fixture in front of Bell Market. Lapping plans to emphasize this technique, and wants to have someone out there on every Saturday and Sunday before the primary.

"I wish I could do every weekend myself," he says. "It's fun—you get to meet your neighbors and talk about something that's on everybody's mind." So far, the "ironing-board brigades" have met with some success. Volunteers Lisa Park and David Daskel say that at least half of the people who pass the table take some literature, and many make substantial contributions.

Trujillo's group has considered doing sidewalk work but hasn't arrived at a decision yet. He admits that it provides valuable exposure. "All you have to do is set up in front of the Acme or Bell and 50 percent of the neighborhood will walk or drive by," he says.

But he wonders if the resources required for such activity are worth the results. He hopes to use phone banks to identify and mobilize Mondale voters,

and thinks this will be particularly successful in Noe Valley. "An awful lot is handled by phone there," he says, "and everyone's got one."

The sidewalk approach is more at odds with the Jackson campaign's philosophy. That organization is concentrating on small and large gatherings in specific locations. "We'll be visiting the churches, holding coffee klatches, that sort of thing," says Baker.

He regards California as a highly diverse state, and for that reason considers it important to get to know people on the local level. "We're trying to broaden our base," he says. He wants to make sure that his people are well acquainted with the characteristics of each neighborhood.

Lack of money is a common complaint. All three campaigns said their approach was partly determined by the amount of funds required by the various methods. On the other hand, they've had little trouble finding volunteers.

Can we expect to see the candidates kissing babies in Noe Valley? Baker expresses enthusiasm for the idea of neighborhood visits by his candidate, and fellow campaigner Royale notes that Jackson has plans to be in the 5th district on May 12. Lapping says of Hart, "I plan to lobby for a neighborhood appearance, and a lot of others feel the same way." Trujillo doesn't know whether Mondale will be making local visits, but agrees with Baker and Lapping that such appearances can be valuable.

During May, the primary campaign will be in full swing. Get ready for the billboards and leaflets that will blanket the neighborhood, be prepared to navigate sidewalks crowded with tables, and don't be bashful about voicing your opinions—a lot of ears will be listening.

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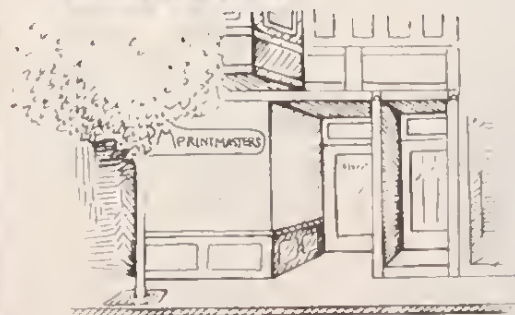


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• Little Italy •

Continued from Page 1

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner

But with the arrival of 1984, Little Italy began getting repeated visits from fire department officials who were not there for *saltimbocca*. The uniformed visitors observed that the owners had restored the front tables and were operating at well above the F-2 maximum. They also found no sprinkler system, and tables and chairs were obstructing what they considered to be an essential rear exit. A building inspector was subsequently dispatched to measure the restaurant's floor space.

All this resulted in a Jan. 24 department notice to the owners that their fire clearance had been rescinded and that they would have to reduce their seating to 41 (determined by dividing the total area by 15 square feet per person.) The notice was followed by more frequent inspections and finally by an order to appear at an abatement hearing of the public health department, to determine whether the restaurant's permit to operate should be revoked.

Owners and employees alike were at a loss to explain this unwanted attention, which forced unprecedented reductions in seating, staff and revenue. Kreitzman pointed to a letter from a disgruntled customer, who had complained to the fire department about the crowd size and noise. This patron, according to Kreitzman, is "rich, famous and fifth generation." Lefer also recalled having been threatened with revenge by another customer, purportedly a highly-placed city bureaucrat, who had felt himself hurried on a busy night.

And both owners were able to cite cases of restaurants which had never been checked by the powers-to-be, despite considerably worse overcrowding. A woman from the fire department had reportedly told Lefer that the fire inspectors take their marching orders from City Hall.

Whatever the cause, Kreitzman and Lefer were forced to watch their business drop off \$10,000 a week and the atmosphere turn "dead, like a French restaurant," in Lefer's words. Six employees were laid off in January and even more a few weeks later.

Although watchful of the layoffs and wary of the resulting change in job duties, the union restrained itself from hassling the owners and instead wrote a letter to Mayor Dianne Feinstein lauding Lefer's "good faith efforts" to comply with the civil codes and urging the continuation of the restaurant's permit to operate.

A union organizer and several current and former Little Italy employees also joined Kreitzman and Lefer at a March 15 hearing at the public health department. Before a panel of civil servants chaired by Health Director Mervyn Sil-



Photo by Martin Klimck

Business at the once crowded and cacophonous Little Italy is a ghost of what it once was. The fire department has recently decided to limit the restaurant's capacity to 41 seats.

verman, the fire department's Gary Meltzner stated the case against the restaurant, referring to its "chronic overcrowding" and its failure to initiate fire safety measures. Lefer replied that he'd thought of putting in a sprinkler, but had decided against it when he realized the expense would not net him an increase in capacity.

Silverman asked what it would take to satisfy the fire folk, and Meltzner said the owners would have to promise not to exceed the 41-person limit and to maintain a plaque stating the maximum occupancy. On these conditions Silverman agreed not to revoke the permit, Kreitzman and Lefer agreed to comply, and there was a brief round of applause from the employees.

Bullets at Dente

Since the hearing the owners have held to their promise while biting the bullets of decreased cash flow and customer frustration. Near the front door they dutifully posted a hand-lettered "plaque" declaring the occupancy, but they surrounded it with a display for their waiting patrons: the letter from the complaining customer, the fire department citations, and a portentous request that customers "sign our mailing list so we can inform you of our new location." Visitations from the authorities have ceased, with the exception of a request to clear the waiting area and another to

block out the customer's phone number: he's been plagued by threatening calls.

The mailing list reflects Kreitzman and Lefer's judgment that they cannot keep going at their present diminished capacity. They have tried and failed to obtain a variance, based on a redesign, that would bring them up to 49 seats.

Kreitzman feels he'll have to reduce the number of items on Little Italy's extensive and varied menu to match the reduced clientele and staff. "Scallops come in five-pound blocks," he points out, "and swiss chard and spinach are too hard to prep. Sweetbreads, chicken livers, and pork chops will probably have to go too."

In the meantime, Kreitzman and Lefer are scouring the newspapers for new spots, and have already expressed an interest in a space on upper Polk Street with twice the capacity. Lefer wants his new space to recreate the hustle and bustle of the old Little Italy. "I want it to be Jewish, not Christian," he jokes. When they move, they may either sell their present place or convert it to a "Little Italy To Go," making use of any extra space for a small bar.

Waitress Lisa Jaicks claims that Lefer has already approached some workers about moving with him, but has assiduously avoided those active in the union. Lefer rejects the insinuation, though, and says he'll consider jobs at the new place for laid-off union employees.

Nevertheless, his partner expressed a desire to avoid unionization by offering a strong in-house contract at the new location.

The Advent of Avanti

Everybody from the union to the neighborhood to Kreitzman and Lefer is wondering what will be happening around the corner at Avanti, an Italian restaurant scheduled to open its polished doors at 1334 Castro St. this month. A clue to the mystery lies in the realization that the operation, owned by Lisa Wong, is under the watchful eye, nose and palate of Wong's long-time friend and landlady, Luisa Esposito. Esposito is proprietor of the Italian restaurant which bears her first name 10 blocks to the north on Castro Street, which was itself the object of Local 2 picketing last year before a contract was signed.

Esposito has encouraged Wong to check in with the union and to be otherwise careful: the sidewalk in front of Avanti has been broken to allow handicapped access, and the occupancy level has been certified at 49.

With Esposito supervising sauces, Avanti will serve up pasta, pizza, veal dishes, and family-style antipasto featuring pepperoncini, calamari, shrimp and eggplant. Wong declares that her food will be simply "better" than Little Italy's, and Esposito says the cost will be competitive, though "if I have my finger in there, they won't have to worry about prices."

With or without competition, the folks at Little Italy are worried. "There's less money for everybody," sighs Maitre d' Mark Cherry. "This just ain't the same old place." □

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Conservation Corps: Spiffing Up the City While Sharpening Skills

By Suzanne Scott

By 7:30 most mornings, a small cadre of men and women are already in uniform doing vigorous calisthenics. A half hour later, they're donning yellow hard hats and climbing into trucks loaded with shovels, hammers and paint brushes. For the next eight hours they clear debris, repair dilapidated buildings, paint over graffiti and otherwise work themselves to the bone—all for a mere \$3.35 an hour. Who are these dedicated people? They're new recruits in San Francisco's campaign to clean up the city while providing vocational training: the members of the San Francisco Conservation Corps.

The month-old corps, a private, non-profit corporation, offers jobs for young men and women between the ages of 16 and 23. It currently employs 31 workers, who are divided into three crews, each assigned to a different project.

One of the first beneficiaries of the corps' youthful energy was the Twin Peaks area. In less than three weeks last month, a crew scoured the hillsides, clearing out garbage and unwanted vegetation and preparing the soil for new trees and flowers. This group will return later for the second phase of the Twin Peaks project, but in the meantime they've moved on to the Christmas Tree Point area to spruce up some buildings with a new paint job.

A second crew has been stationed at the Cadillac Hotel in the Tenderloin. They're installing new locks and fixing up run-down bathrooms in hopes of keeping the rents low for the hotel's tenants.

The Corps' third crew is doing some landscaping and repairing loose plaster in the cell blocks at Alcatraz.

Robert Burkhardt, the director of the SFCC and a Noe Valley resident, isn't sure what will come next. "We provide labor," he says. "We are told what to do." Each project has a different sponsor—the city's Recreation and Park Department, for instance—and the Corps serves as contractor.

The SFCC's first project was to make its headquarters at Fort Mason habitable. New carpet has been laid, and the walls are painted a bright white. Burkhardt's office is adorned with maps of California and photos of the staff and Mayor Dianne Feinstein, who along with Judge Anthony Kline was instrumental in getting the SFCC started. The mayor's support has generated a lot of funding from both the public and private sector, Burkhardt says.

Burkhardt is both extremely cordial and serious when talking about the SFCC. Speaking with the voice of authority, a little like that of Capt. Daniel



Photo by Joel Abramson

S.F. Conservation Corpspersons kick off their day with calisthenics and march on to clean-up duty at Twin Peaks, the Tenderloin, and elsewhere.

Travanti on "Hill Street Blues." Burkhardt insists the Corps "is a no-nonsense program." He and his staff of eight have high expectations and put tough demands on the young people because "employers want good workers, regardless of skills."

The SFCC is modeled after both the California Conservation Corps, where Burkhardt worked for over seven years, and the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps. "Our historical legacy goes back 50 years," says Burkhardt. Local members of the National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni regularly come out to give pep talks to SFCC members.

Corps member Carla Fuller says that besides the ability to put up sheetrock and use different tools, she's learned "more responsibility, to get to work on time, and physical exercise."

Fellow member George Cervantes joined the SFCC to increase his English and writing skills and to get more experience in construction, which he did while living in Mexico. "I learn a lot from other people," says Cervantes, "and they learn from me. Like how to use tools more simply and fast. It's going to help me a lot."

One day a week the crews take a break from physical work and stay in the classroom. They learn such things as first aid, CPR, English grammar and composition, as well as job search techniques. Each person is required to keep a daily journal. Burkhardt explains, "It's not enough for you to be a ditch digger. You need to use your mind. Otherwise you'll be unable to compete."

They also learn discipline. Burkhardt fired two workers the second day for being two to three minutes late. Potential

corps personnel are warned with five basic rules: "booze it, lose it; get high, goodbye; throw a punch, gone before lunch; steal, no appeal; non-cooperation, unpaid vacation."

In addition to the practical job skills, Burkhardt stresses the value of working with people of other ethnic backgrounds. Whenever racial conflicts arise, the crew supervisor initiates an inpromptu discussion. Burkhardt likes to keep things out in the open. When he recently fired a worker, he explained his reasons to the rest of the corps.

Burkhardt does give another chance to those who express remorse. "I believe in a second chance," he says. "I got an enormous amount of second chances in my life." The ousted corps member is usually assigned to a community organization to do volunteer work. If he lived in Noe Valley, for example, he'd probably do his penance at the Noe Valley Ministry or Jamestown Community Center. If the worker can prove he's serious, he will be reinstated in the Corps.

Community groups don't have to wait for the "second chance" program to get a public building or park area fixed up in their neighborhood. To request a Corps project, call staffer John Oubre at SFCC headquarters.

And the SFCC is still recruiting workers for both a one-year commitment (18 to 23-year-olds) and a shorter summer program (16 to 21 years). "Our goal is 50 percent women," says Burkhardt. "We are very eager to have more women applicants."

If you fall within either of those age categories, are out of school and unemployed, you can apply by calling 928-SFCC. But, remember, don't be late for the interview. □

Vasily Christodoulou (1932-1984)

Last month the neighborhood bid a harmonious goodbye to Vasily Christodoulou, well-known Noe Valley resident and operator of Salonikas, the bar he named after the Greek town where he was born in 1932. Vasily died April 10 from complications related to a brain tumor.

Simple services were held April 16 at Mission Chapel on Valencia Street. They were led by Rev. Norma Tringali of the Metaphysical Church of Amron, and were attended by fellow merchants, friends, employees and musicians who have performed at the bar's weekend jazz series. Among the latter were Newton Thomas and Toby Silverman, who gave soulful a cappella renditions of "Amazing Grace" and "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."

The Rev. Tringali recounted Vasily's reputation for an unpredictable temper, but also hailed his roles as "a guru, a teacher, a healer, and a compassionate man who loved." He'd been a captain in the Greek merchant marine and a submarine commando before settling for a more sedentary life as proprietor of the El Greco in North Beach and Mr. B's Boutique, formerly located in the spot now occupied by Rahat Shoes.

"The most important thing," he once told the *Voice*, "is to satisfy your customers, be there when they need you, and make the whole thing enjoyable." Thus he put a great deal of care into decorating Salonikas with cast-off Victorian fixtures and mementos from his personal past.

Vasily's wake following the service vibrated with the singing, playing, dancing and good fellowship which he felt were entwined in his own roots. As drummer Richie Goldberg testified, "Vasily had a musical note, as we all have, but his was never sharp and never flat... it was always natural. We will carry on that melody, to keep it everlasting." □



Vasily Christodoulou

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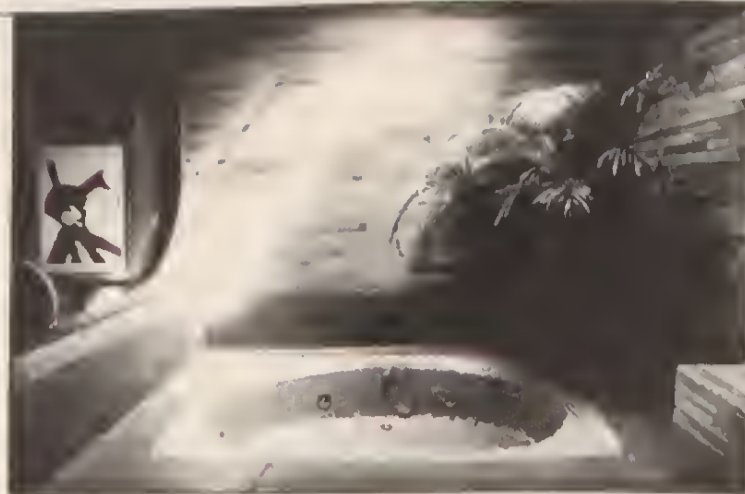
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S.F. Beacon: Postal Worker's Pride and Joy

By Steve Steinberg

Remember the *San Francisco Beacon*, the little news weekly sold from the bright red vending machine near the corner of 24th and Sanchez Streets?

Printed on white paper and four pages long, the *Beacon* used to look more like a newsletter than a newspaper. The paper's exceedingly short stories (sometimes no more than a paragraph) covered meetings and events in Noe Valley, Eureka Valley, the Mission and Bernal Heights. Often the articles were little more than press releases put out by local organizations.

Well, the *Beacon* is still around, but it has undergone a complete transformation. What used to be a folksy little bulletin is now a newspaper catering to the city's legal sector. The *Beacon* looks different too—it's now an eight-page tabloid, printed on regular newsprint.

The *Beacon*, which comes out every Friday, is the personal news medium of Dalegor Wladyslaw Suchecki (Suchecki to his friends), a San Francisco postal worker who over the past seven years has poured all his extra time and money into preserving the *Beacon* as the vox populi for the "middle class point of view."

Suchecki publishes his paper out of a cramped office on Brady Street, a tight little alley near 12th and Market Streets. Suchecki's printing press and typesetting machine share his office space.

A genial, portly man of 49, Suchecki is somewhat vague about the purpose his newspaper serves. He says he wants to reach the "thinking middle-class person," whom he says the media has long alienated. He also says he wants to address the issues more forcefully than have some of the other city papers. As to the kind of issues he will write about, he says only, "It depends on what moves me."

Suchecki changed the *Beacon's* format last year as a "matter of necessity," to attract paid legal notices that would make the paper more economically viable. In making the change, he also shifted the paper's emphasis. Now, in-

stead of featuring neighborhood news stories, the paper reflects issues of greater interest to the legal community.

In recent months the *Beacon* has included articles on court rulings, pending state legislation, and upcoming elections. Two stories written for the *Beacon* in February by a reporter for the Capitol News Service, to which Suchecki subscribes, blatantly editorialized in favor of the death penalty and for the right to shoot an intruder in one's home without fear of subsequent prosecution.

Suchecki claims he takes positions that are neither left nor right politically but are aimed at "trying to excite people's imaginations." He endorsed John Anderson for President in 1980 and plans to back Jesse Jackson this year.

Suchecki, who is of Polish descent—his first name, Dalegor, is an ancient Polish title meaning defender of a hill—began the *Beacon* in October 1977 while running for city supervisor from the now defunct sixth district. He readily admits that his first issue was nothing more than an electioneering pamphlet in which he endorsed himself for supervisor.

After losing the election—he came in 10th out of 14 candidates—he decided to keep the paper going. "I got so engrossed in it that I never stopped." He says over the years the paper has interviewed such controversial city figures as Dan White, Harvey Milk and Harry Britt.

The *Beacon* is by no means Suchecki's first, or last, journalistic venture. Back in 1962, during an unsuccessful bid for California secretary of state, Suchecki began publishing the *Alpine Beacon*, according to him the only local newspaper at the time in Alpine County, a small, rural county near South Lake Tahoe.

Suchecki would spend four hours a month at the Alpine County courthouse gathering news, publishing an issue every three weeks. "I enjoyed it...that's not true; it was really hell," he says in the same breath.

He published the *Alpine Beacon* for eight years, from 1962 to 1970, all the while continuing to live in San Francisco. "How could I live in a county like [Al-



Dalegor Suchecki's little newspaper has evolved in seven years from a middle class vox populi to a respectable legal sheet.

pine]?" he laughs.

Originally from Boston, Suchecki has lived in San Francisco since 1957. He presently makes his home in a converted leather factory south of Market Street. He says in his youth he was a real rebel, "a heatnik," and was constantly getting into trouble. There were no convictions, however. He won't specify the exact nature of his past brushes with the law except to say that when his superiors at the post office found out about them, they tried, and failed, to have him fired.

Until recently Suchecki completely financed the *Beacon* out of his own post office earnings. "How do you think I could afford these little transgressions into journalism?" Having enough money—and time—to run the *Beacon* has meant 60-hour work weeks at the post office, accompanied by 50 more hours at the *Beacon*. When does he sleep? "In the afternoons, sometimes...and sometimes at work.... You know, we work for the post office." Suchecki loves to make wisecracks about the stereotypical postal worker.

Suchecki insists that the long hours have been worth it. The paper has given him his pleasure in life, and he prides himself on never having missed a single issue in nearly seven years. Incredibly, Suchecki also manages to publish a monthly Polish newspaper, the *Polonian*, written partly in English and partly in Polish. He is also active in the Polish community and heads a refugee organization.

Having two careers has, however, taken a toll on Suchecki's health. He confesses to periods of work-induced depression and exhaustion. Last year he had an extended hospital stay and considered selling the paper. But an offer of help from a Polish refugee kept the *Beacon* going while he recuperated.

Things have gotten easier for Suchecki, at least in terms of money, since he changed the *Beacon's* direction last year. The paper now consists almost entirely of legal notices and fictitious business statements, which have made the paper financially self-sufficient.

Suchecki sells space for legal notices at such low rates that he has sparked a price war with such competitors as the

San Francisco Recorder and the *San Francisco Banner*. *Banner* publisher Gordon Murray says the battle of rates has brought about a "no-win situation," in which it could conceivably become economically unfeasible to continue printing legal notices.

Although Suchecki has no hesitations about selling space for legal announcements, he has steadfastly refused to sell general advertising space, maintaining that to do so would be to compromise and "prostitute" himself. "Advertising," he claims, "is a severe inducement to think otherwise." He doesn't consider the paid legal notices the same as display advertising because people who post legal announcements in a newspaper are usually required to do so.

Regardless of the *Beacon's* monetary situation, Suchecki has always made it a point to pay the people who have helped put the paper together—often not the case with small newspapers. He has been especially careful to pay his writers. "I felt guilty that I should exploit people who were really into [writing]." Suchecki has done some of the writing himself in addition to editing the paper.

The future looks brighter than ever for Suchecki and the *Beacon*. Circulation now stands at 800 after having hovered around 250 for years. Suchecki claims to be San Francisco's fourth, no, third largest legal newspaper, right behind the *Recorder* and the *Banner*—he claims competitors have tried to buy him out.

He has even started publishing two East Bay versions of the paper: the *Oakland Law Journal* and, appropriately enough, the *Oakland Beacon*. "I love it now," he says. "I can't believe my good fortune."

Success probably won't slow Suchecki down; if anything, it will probably serve as an incentive to put in more hours. He says, with a little black humor, that if he's going to kill himself, he might as well do it for a righteous cause.

The 24th and Sanchez vendor is currently in the shop for repairs, but you can pick up the *San Francisco Beacon* by dropping a quarter into news machines at 27 other locations around the city—almost all of them near a post office. □

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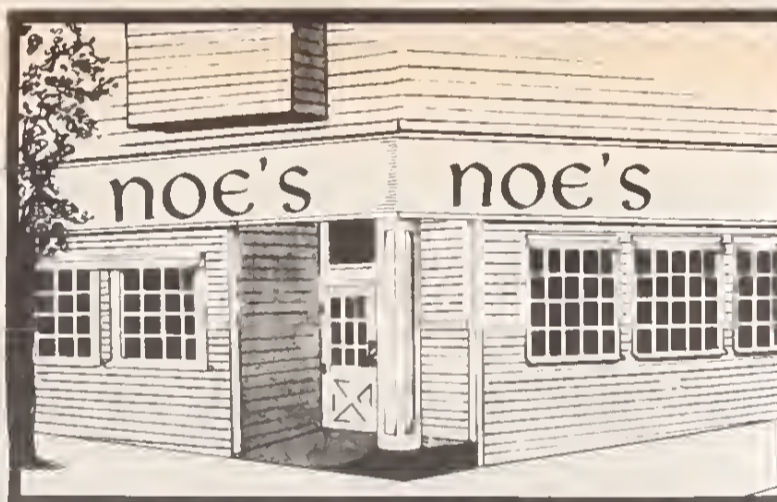
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Fair Play With Friends

The playground at James Lick School at Castro and 25th is about to fill up with the wondrous sights and sounds of the Friends of Noe Valley's first off-the-street fair. Scheduled to open at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 19, the fair will showcase some impressive local talent, including comedian Marga Gomez, pianist and composer Warner Jepson, songstress Cathi Walkup, jazz dance by Dolores Shadel, folk dance by Sol Fenster, folk songs and instrumentals by Bruce Sherman, and a powerhouse jazz jam by Noe Valley Music's softball team, led by renowned guitarist and first baseman Bruce Forman.

You can join in the aerobic demonstrations by the neighborhood's own jumping jock, Robert Scott, and his colleague Leora Myers, and by the Dancergetics crew. Or you can claim some fame in the contests, which range from best sculptured food to break-dancing.

Outside the spotlight, Friends President Sonja Dale and Vice President Jean Amos need your help setting up and tearing down the many exhibits of neighborhood craftspersons, schools, churches, and social and service organizations. Among the groups will be Project SAFE and the Community Boards Program, which will dramatize conflict resolution in a skit.

The fair finishes at 5 p.m., and on the off-chance it will rain, the activities will be rescheduled on Sunday, May 20. To offer help or participation or to check the schedule, call Dale at 285-5289 or Amos at 826-2044.

Groovy Concerts

The Big Chill may seem less chilly when you've got music to evoke those warm memories. Willy Claflin, whose coffeehouse artistry was profiled in the

SHORT TAKES



Photo by Charles Kemard

Jim and Suzi Masica practiced pre-birth self-hypnosis to ensure a smooth delivery for their son, Joe. Now that Joe's a year old, life is a bit more hectic in the Masica household.

February Voice, will bring his mixed bag of nostalgia, puppetry, and original ballads to the Noe Valley Music series on Sunday, May 13, in a concert for dreamers of all ages.

And one week later, Lisa Moskow, alumna of the Ali Akbar School in Marin, will perform North Indian classical music and her own compositions on the sarod. For both concerts the tickets are \$5 for adults, \$3 for kids and seniors, the starting time is 7:30 p.m., and the place is the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. You can get more info evenings at 285-8844.

In Utero Intuition

Can you communicate with your unborn child? Local hypnotist Jim Masica believes you can.

Through the use of hypnosis, what he calls the "natural spontaneous ability of the human mind," Masica and his wife Suzi say that they established prebirth bonding with their baby.

Masica, a student at New College of California, is now integrating this idea into a research project. He's looking for pregnant women and couples to participate in eight hours of workshop using self-hypnosis, guided imagination and intuition to develop prebirth bonding and prepare for a harmonious childbirth experience.

Intrigued? Call him at 431-1739.

Spending Your Evenings

As of this Thursday evening, you'll have a lot more to do on 24th Street than sit around consuming cocktails and ice cream. Eleven shops have decided to stay open late Thursdays, including Bathriggans, Cathexis, Colorcrane, Cotton & Company, the Courtyard Cafe, Equ Imports, Joshua Simon, the Pantry, Rabat and Rabat Shoes (all of which are extending their hours to 9 p.m.) and Common Scents (to 8 p.m.).

Barbara Jones, bookkeeper and salesperson at Joshua Simon, generated the idea in response to complaints from customers who had to rush home to spend the money they'd earned downtown.

Art & Awareness

The Beachhead has for several months been presenting Sunday evening combinations of political awareness and entertainment. After losing their North Beach location in the Old Spaghetti Factory, they relocated a couple of months back to Valencia Rose.

This month they'll explore the situation in El Salvador, with presentations by Ron Ramon Cardona of the FNLM and FDR. On May 13 Cardona will give a history of these groups' approach to the Salvadoran struggle, and on May 20 he will present a communiqué drawn up by the groups. Emcee for both evenings is Ray Telles of KQED, and making music will be singer-songwriter Barbara Dane on May 13 and Sukay on May 20.

The events begin at 8 p.m. at Valencia Rose, 766 Valencia St., and you can find out more by calling Mary O'Brien at 826-6918.

Sunday's Spirit

This Sunday, May 6, the Noe Valley Ministry becomes a church, which will upgrade its status in the Presbyterian administrative structure and bring certain advantages.

Friends of various faiths can celebrate all day, beginning with a worship service (10 a.m.) and proceeding to a potluck reception and brunch (11:30 a.m.), which will feature the more than 40 artists who have contributed to the "From the Spirit" show, presently hanging on the Ministry's upper floor. A "Spirit Program" (1 to 2:30 p.m.) will see some of the building's users give offerings of appreciation in a variety of musical, dramatic, and other forms. Finally, the film "Imogen" will be screened starting at 2:45 p.m.

Phone the Ministry at 282-2317 for more details.

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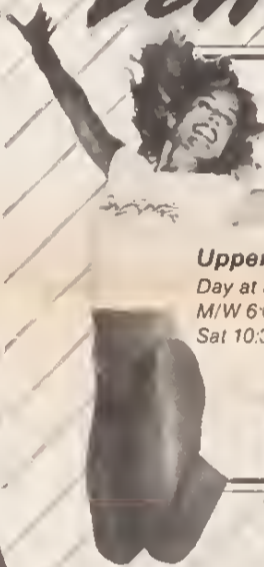
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Breakdancing was exposed to the public in the rhythmic footage of last year's movie "Flashdance." Now you need go no further than your neighborhood schoolyards and sidewalks, where you'll see youthful limbs whirling in intensive competition. *Voice* photographer Tom Wachs caught these kids at Everett Middle School's Bubble Dream Carnival, where the critical onlookers included a visiting team from Daly City.

**Photography by
Tom Wachs**

Ensemble Evokes Spirit of Survival

By Laura Castleberry

Alexander Larsen, actor, playwright, teacher and director of the San Francisco Ensemble, a community theater company based in Noe Valley, is not concerned about doing popular, entertaining or commercially successful theater pieces. He'd rather present works that involve and inform the audience, leaving a lasting impression.

Active in theater since the age of 12, Larsen feels a personal and professional responsibility to perform material that has something to say. He is also committed to disproving the notion that local productions are by their very nature amateurish. "You can be professional and still do community theater," he maintains.

This month he'll have a chance to prove his theories with "A Ceremony for Nuclear Survivors," a modern mystery play to be performed at the Noe Valley Ministry weekends in May.

"Ceremony" is the product of months of workshop experimentation by Larsen and the Ensemble's seven cast members. The play is an abstract collage—vignettes of poetry and drama from many sources, including Strindberg, Camus and Wilfred Owen, as well as the personal experiences of the actors and Larsen himself. Its tone and techniques bear the influence of Grotowski, Artaud and Brecht, emphasizing movement and non-verbal communication more than dialogue.

"Ceremony" begins by seeking to evoke the natural, primitive self within each person. In a hushed atmosphere, a single voice breaks the silence of the room, intoning the "om" mantra. One by



Photo by Tom Wachs

The San Francisco Ensemble's "Ceremony for Nuclear Survivors," playing at the Noe Valley Ministry this month, engenders audience and cast with a sense of strength in the face of nuclear insanity.

one, other voices join in until all are repeating the sound, creating the impression of a religious tribal ritual. The tribe and the ritual are familiar ones. The ritual—the tribe's struggle for survival. The tribe—humanity.

Larsen emphasizes that "the Ensemble is not a political group," but that "Ceremony" expresses and explores our deeply felt spiritual reaction to the nuclear insanity." He goes on to say, "The play does not offer a solution, but we feel we've come one step closer to a solution in knowing ourselves and in realizing that we as individuals have a responsibility—we are stronger and more powerful than we've been led to believe and events are not beyond our control. This is what we hope our 'Ceremony' will convey to the audience."

Cast member Steve Zolno agrees. "The value for people in seeing our play would be for them to become aware of the universal tendency to avoid responsibility. Irresponsibility is one way of contributing to violence in the world."

He's joined by actress Theresa Dailey, who's "excited about doing 'Ceremony' because it deals with the fact that individuals create their own reality. When we realize the power to change our lives comes from within, we no longer need to see ourselves as victims, afraid and separate from each other."

Ananda Lovejoy plays "the spiritual side of a person who has violent dreams about World War III. She is 'saved' only when she remembers that we are one—that if you hurt, I hurt too."

Director Larsen thinks the play's reverence takes it beyond the "nuclear soap opera of 'The Day After.' It is a very spiritual play."

"A Ceremony for Nuclear Survivors" will be presented Friday and Saturday evenings throughout May at 8:30 p.m. at the Noe Valley Ministry. For further information and reservations, call 552-5276. □



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From 'Boston Blackie' to Mayor of 29th Street

By Tom Wachs

Thirty-six years ago Frank Tomasoni built his Toy and Novelty Store in what had been the driveway of his home at 435 29th St. Inside the small store a parent can find a gift or favor to round out a birthday party, and a kid can spend his change on that hard to find "real" nickel that squirts water 10 feet.

An eclectic assortment of toys, games, gag items, and comics are piled high to either side of the shop's one aisle. There are candy bars, cigarettes, greeting cards, and some "practical" things such as umbrellas, telephone cords, and screwdriver kits. The wall beside the front door, however, is reserved for news clippings, photographs, and other memorabilia, most of which tell of Tomasoni's early career as a lightweight boxer dubbed "Boston Blackie."

Born in West Albany, New York, in 1909, Tomasoni began boxing in his teens as an amateur in the Navy, but continued to fight professionally after his discharge. He boxed in more than 300 fights over a 10-year period, winning around 70 percent, he says.

He mainly appeared in New York, New Jersey, and Boston, where he picked up his nickname. "I boxed there and won the Golden Gloves. I had six fights that night. I won them all, kept on goin', goin', goin'. And that's how I got the name 'Boston Blackie'." Tomasoni also made a trip to the Philippines in the late twenties, where he won two fights and earned the then hefty sum of \$2,000 per bout. "We came back broke," he laughed.

Arriving in San Francisco from New York in 1946, Frank and his wife, Rose, moved directly to Noe Valley, attracted by the warm weather and recommendations from friends. The couple started the toy business right away, but soon after Frank took a job with the city's Sewer Department. Over the years he also developed a catering business that brought him into contact with many clubs and organizations. Although he continued to take care of the toy store's inventory, Rose ran the daily operation. After he retired from the city in 1972 and following the death of his wife four years ago, Frank took over running the store.

Tomasoni points with pride to his membership in the National Veteran Boxers' Association. This is not a group that you can join, but one that must vote you in. He always makes it to the association's annual dinner in New York City to see his buddies, and last year he was the honored guest.

During his fighting days, "Boston Blackie" made many friends in the boxing world. He sparred with Jack Dempsey and knew Gene Tunney as well as Max and Buddy Baer. "I trained with Buddy for footwork. Even now I've got good footwork, old as I am."

Asked which opponent particularly stood out in his mind, Tomasoni immediately recalled a fellow from his early bouts in the Navy. "The toughest guy I fought was Billy Patrol. He was a son of a gun, the 'Fargo Express'. What a tough guy he was. He beat me."

Lou Ambers, Tony Zale, Barney Ross and Jack Sharkey are some of the other names he mentioned, his voice filled



Photo by Tom Wachs

A tiny but well-stocked toy store serves as sanctuary for Frank Tomasoni, formerly known to the boxing world as "Boston Blackie."

with respect and fondness for the fraternity of the boxing world.

Involvement in his local community is also important to Tomasoni. He brought out a citation that he received last year from the city of Schenectady, N.Y., where he lived and ran a restaurant called Blackie's Tavern. The citation was presented to him at a surprise event at the city hall.

"My brother took me down...jeez, I see all these people, the band playing, it was really something." The citation proclaims a day in his honor and commends him for his civic contributions. It specifically mentions a park he was instrumental in getting built.

Locally, Tomasoni has been active in many groups, particularly the Fraternal Order of Eagles. He was also a member and president for several years of the now disbanded Upper Noe Valley Neighborhood Council. The group used to take

kids on excursions and was active in petitioning to get the Upper Noe Valley Recreation Center at Day and Sanchez built and improved. "I spent a lot of nights down at City Hall fighting the supervisors."

Except for sparring with the supes, Tomasoni's had little occasion to put up his dukes in San Francisco. He did, however, help coach kids at the Columbia Boys' Club for a couple of years. And for the past several years he has donated his catering services to the Special Olympics' annual dinner at the Hall of Flowers.

A neighbor who dropped in at the store one day last month reminded Frank of the title bestowed on him by the Upper Noe Valley Neighborhood Council some years ago: the Mayor of 29th Street. That recognition brought him satisfaction. "I'm happy I've done a lot of good for people. That's what counts." He is in no danger of facing a recall. □

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By Mazook

THE DOWNTOWN NOE VALLEY (DNV) NOISE SERVICE reports that while the locals traded "6.2" quake stories late last month, Noe Valley entrepreneurs were doing some moving and shaking of their own. Little Italy was looking for new digs elsewhere (see story, page 1), and other merchants were shuffling deeds and prime spots on 24th Streets commercial turf.

After 16 years in the kitchen, Plate's bakers Erich and Marriane Eberle have sold their business at 4073 24th St. to Werner Lieske, a baker from Greentown, Long Island, N. Y. Werner says he "loves California" so much he just had to move here. Erich will keep his fingers in the dough for a while, teaching Werner the vagaries of local tastes. But Marianne plans to "go home and do some housework," after which she'll seriously engage in "social and cultural activities."

Noe Valley Music, at 3914A 24th St., has also undergone a reorganization. Bay Bridge Records and Noe Valley Music man Larry Walker has been joined by Bay Area luthier (guitar builder) Doug Roomian and Kicking Mule recording artist Dale Miller. The Larry, Doug and Dale show should enhance the local music scene.

THE TANGLED WEB WE WEAVE: Trish Pillsbury is moving her lingerie shop, Balhiggans, from the Noe Valley Mall to part of the space being vacated by Jim Yip's Sea Breeze Cleaners across from Skeffington's on Castro at 24th Street. Sea Breeze is moving into roomier quarters up the street (1402 Castro St.), with plans to offer a coin-operated laundry along with their regular dry-cleaning services.

Meanwhile, the rumor is the owner of Joshua Simon will expand her 24th Street store all the way back into the space currently occupied by Balhiggans in the Mall. Skeffington's old slot in the Mall has already been filled by Buxton's

and now
for
the

RUMORS

behind
the
news

Office Works, providing a variety of secretarial services and publishing a newsletter titled "The Value of Oil Producers." (As all you oil producers know, this is a trade journal which monitors the activities of 140 small American and Canadian oil companies. It's widely read in the industry, we're told. The subscription rate is \$260 per year, a mere drop in the barrel.)

Two new video rental shops will open soon on 24th Street, joining Video Wave in what promises to be a Video Stars War. "National Video" will open its third S.F. location at 24th and Church, where Mercury Pharmacy used to be, on May 15. "Video Uno" should show up at Sanchez and 24th in the near future.

It's no news that 24th Street's Real Food Company is expanding next door into what was Ver Brugge's Meat Market. But the scoop is that Real Food has decided to abandon its plans to extend the building back to the property line. Jersey Street residents and the East and West of Castro Improvement Club put a stop to that notion, voicing strong opposition to the planning commission. The natural foods store will reportedly plant flowers in the back yard instead.

Steve Han has bought the popular Lower Noe Valley coffeehouse La Bohème from Ed Davidson and Michael Randolph. No worry, Max and Glenna will still capp the chino in those critical a.m. hours.

It looks like quits for Pound's Appliance Service at 1193 Church St. after over 35 years in DNV. The space is for rent at a mere \$1,000 per month.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES were scrawled on the walls of Red Peppers for the

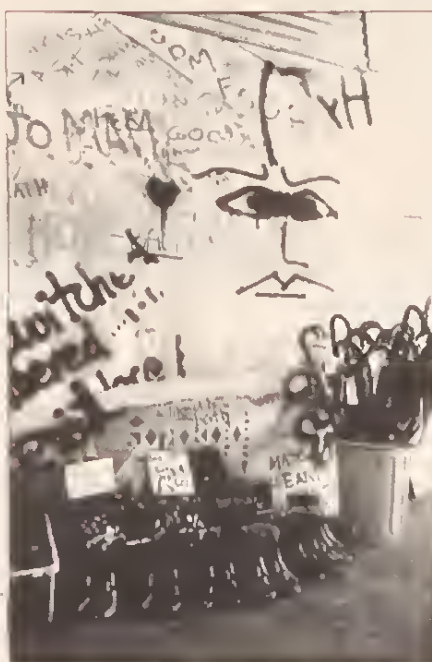


Photo by Charles Kennard

Twenty-fourth Street's Red Peppers got hot last month over some questionable graffiti on the store's walls.

store's grand opening in DNV a couple of months back, the handiwork of artist Gene Dalton and friends. Red Peppers, now with five stores in San Francisco, is in the words of head Pepper Steve Locks a "suburban hip five and dime," featuring what Manager Barbara Graham calls "low-cost survival fashion." Steve had commissioned Gene to create "New York City, 'West Side Story' street art" on the shop's walls, but wound up with some disturbing Holocaust motifs on opening day. Realizing that what might be suburban hip elsewhere might not wash in Noe Valley, Steve pulled a Fred Methner on his own place and whitewashed almost all of the graffiti off the interiors. The survivors of this purge are visible in the front windows and back of the store (see photo, this page).

A sign on the famous bulletin board at the Meat Market should give you an idea of what it takes to find a flat in Noe Valley these days:

Flat mate wanted, \$200/mo. We prefer artistically or philosophically inclined individuals who do not abuse body, drugs, tobacco, alcohol—who are not politically, religiously or socially zealous, who are personally spirit(essence)-ually holistic and progressive or mellow...phone Chris or Wolf.

In a related item, *California* magazine ran a story in its April 18 issue called "Surreal Estate—Apartment Hunting by the Bay." It focused on, of all places, Noe Valley, and concluded, "A week on the trail has altered our sense of San Francisco geography; we now refer to Noe Valley, reflexively, as No-way Valley." Harrumph! Perhaps the authors should give Chris or Wolf a call.

☎ ☎ ☎

TOPS OF THE POPS at Streetlight

Records, says manager Jeff Moss, is the Eurythmics' "Touch." The real news, adds Jeff, is that "Michael Jackson has finally slowed down." Fred Shardon reports that topping the charts at Aquarius Records is Laurie Anderson's hit album "Mister Heartbreak."

Sheri Lempert, scooper at Double Rainbow Ice Cream, tells us that the most requested cone topper is Ultra Chocolate. Dave Juarez, over at Bud's Ice Cream, says he scoops more French Vanilla than anything else. If that's too sweet for you, check out Matsuya, the Japanese restaurant at 3856 24th St. where sushi master Yoshi Takechi serves 60 varieties of sushi. Numero uno is "Maguro" (raw tuna)

☎ ☎ ☎

CONGRATS to Cover to Cover bookstore Manager Joan Vigliotta for winning top honors in a U.C. Press window-dressing contest for her "Alice in Wonderland" display. Joan's window, competing nationwide with 87 other bookstores, celebrated the release of a newly illustrated *Alice*. The Number One seller at Cover to Cover, however, is not *Alice* but Shirley—Shirley MacLaine's new book, *Out on a Limb*.

Further applause to Noe Valley's Charles Koppelman, winner of the S.F. Film Festival's "Silver Golden Gate Award" for his first film, "Squatters: The Other Philadelphia Story." "Squatters," to be aired on PBS July 8 (check local listings), is an inspirational documentary depicting the struggle for decent housing of a feisty group of poor people in Philly. Charles picked up his second-place trophy at the festival's April 23 screening of the film, which left the audience all fired up over its righteous cause and hot soundtrack. (Sweet Honey in the Rock sing up a storm. Don't miss it.)

Another local, poet/actress Gwen Carmen, will be playing the "Angela Davis character" in "The Tie That Binds," a play written and directed by Mary Booker to be performed May 11 and 12 at the Bay View Opera House (see calendar item). Gwen's all fired up about this one, which tells the story of a black woman who's wrestling with the emotional upheaval caused by her divorce.

☎ ☎ ☎

BOTTOM OF THE BARREL: See you all at the Friends of Noe Valley Fair at James Lick playground May 19, where I will M.C. a "Bay Area Best" water-tasting contest. Be there or be dry. Bye, kids. □



Photo by Joel Abramson

Having a Roller Ball

By Gary Sabo

To most patrons of Hopwell's Restaurant, the cheery, grandmotherly waitress everyone knows as "Mary" is the picture of domesticity. Little do they know that during off-work hours she's a demon on wheels, or more precisely, on skates. A winner of more skating awards than she can remember, Mary Vargas took second place in the Goldskate Free Dance competition in Bakersfield last February.

After 37 years of waitressing on 24th Street, 73-year-old Vargas won't hear of a foot-soaking after treading the linoleum paths. Instead, she dons her skates three nights a week and hits the rink in Dublin. "I'm full of vitality," she explains, "and I gotta get some of that out."

There's no doubt she's got vitality. The question is, where does she get it?



Photo by Joel Abramson

Mary Vargas: waitress by day, rollerskater by night.

Vargas giggles as if the question were silly. "I don't know," she says sweetly. Pity. □



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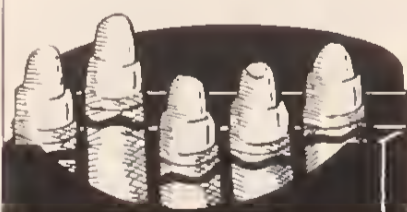
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Across the Boards

Right Relations with Roommates and Lovers

By Suzanne London and Mary Duffy
Staff, Community Boards

Editor's Note: The Community Boards Program provides free dispute resolution by trained volunteers in 20 San Francisco neighborhoods. The Eureka/Noe Valley office is located on Church Street near 24th; telephone 821-2470. The following is an account of an actual hearing before the local board; names and certain details have been changed to protect the participants' identity.

A shattered romance, a destructive relationship, and a need for interdependence challenged a Community Boards panel last month. In this case, the parties to the dispute were not the typical neighbors bickering over a minor disturbance, but a man and woman distraught over their disintegrating love affair.

Loretta Tucker and Michael Walker had been living in Michael's house for two years. At one time they were lovers, but now they were just roommates. Loretta did all the housekeeping and cooking, which she regarded as a full-time job. She felt frustrated and unappreciated by Michael and wanted to move out, but as a student, she could not afford to. After failing to solve their problems through therapy and other more traditional means, the couple decided to try a different approach—Community Boards.

Five Noe/Eureka neighbors assembled as a panel to help Michael and Loretta clarify their relationship and its

future. First they heard Loretta's emotionally charged version of the situation. She was upset and angry: "I'm sick of being his mother, lover, and maid. He sees me as nothing more than his slave. He can cook his own meals and clean up his own mess. I quit!"

Michael had only one concern of his own: "I don't have any problems, she's the one who has the problem. I guess that the only problem I have is her!"

After airing many long-standing conflicts, Michael and Loretta and the panelists realized the communication lines were clearing, but one major question remained. What did Michael and Loretta hope to get from Community Boards?

The couple agreed to mull it over and to return for a second hearing. Two weeks later, they were ready to face the realities of their situation and to make some compromises. First, they acknowledged they didn't want to live together any more. Both realized the relationship was self-destructive. Michael agreed to move out and let Loretta stay in his house rent-free for two months. He gave the Toyota to Loretta, and agreed to make the payments until a month after she found a job. Michael also agreed to split the cost of Loretta's eventual move. Lastly, Michael said he'd pay their Macy's and Magnin's bills until Loretta was working.

Loretta agreed to pay \$300 rent per month, with the stipulation that two months' rent would be waived. She also agreed to pay the credit card and car pay-



MORE BOOKS TO READ

Here's a selection of new books at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. (between Castro and Diamond). The branch is open Tuesday through Saturday. Call 285-2788 for exact times.

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Small Boat Sailing: The Basic Guide—Bob Bond & Steve Sleight
California Coastal Access Guide—new expanded edition
The Well-tempered Sentence: A Punctuation Handbook for the Innocent—Karen E. Gordon
Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes—Stephen Jay Gould
The One Minute Father—Spencer Johnson
The One Minute Mother—Spencer Johnson

Children Under Stress: How to Help With the Everyday Stresses of Childhood—Donald Medeiros
Framed: the New Right Attack on Chief Justice Rose Bird and the Courts—Betty Medsger
'Night, Mother: A Play—Marsha Norman
Axe Handles: Poems—Gary Snyder
Lines and Shadows—Joseph Wambaugh

FICTION

The Robots of Dawn—Isaac Asimov
Smart Women—Judy Blume
Any Four Women... Could Rob the Bank of Italy—Ann Cornelisen
White Gold Wielder—Stephen Donaldson
Gods of Riverworld—Philip José Farmer
Places in the World a Woman Could Walk—Janet Kauffman

ments as soon as she found work. The final agreement was that if Michael wanted his house back, Loretta would start looking for a place in August, and would be out by New Year's Day.

After two hearings and nine hours of financial wrangling and emotional exchanges, Michael and Loretta walked out of the Community Boards office with a newfound strength in negotiating and resolving personal conflicts. At a post-hearing interview, Loretta said, "I felt like before the hearing we were dealing

with the conflict the same old way. I'd get angry, Michael would turn off and retreat, and nothing would get resolved. We got a chance to break those patterns at the hearing, and talked to each other in ways we hadn't been able to for years."

Michael added, "Because the service was free, and we'd tried so many other means to solve our problems, I was skeptical that we'd ever reach an agreement through Community Boards. I wish we'd done this months ago. The results were better than I ever would have guessed." □

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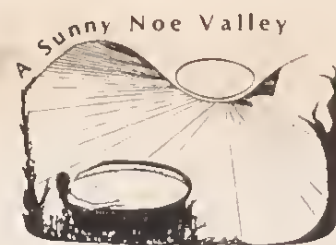
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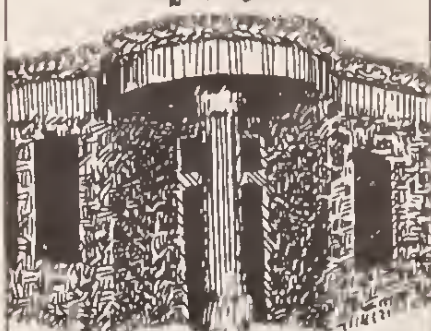
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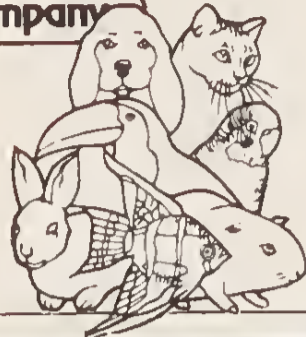
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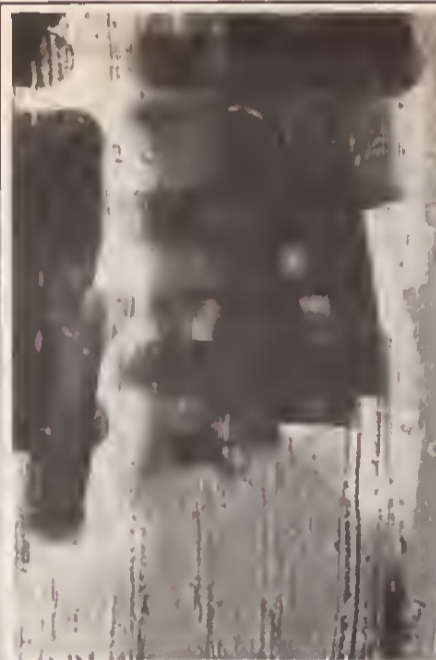


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DOWNWARDLY MOBILE retired white-collar worker, 30, able-bodied, seeks part-and/or flex-time work assisting landscapers/gardeners. John, 282-2207.

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CALENDAR

MAY 1-12: "Moods, Meadows and Memories"—PAINTINGS and drawings by Diana Rose Medeiros. The Farm Gallery, 1499 Potrero Ave. Mon.-Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 826-4290

MAY 1-31: "Songs of the Planets" exhibit of works in oil by LUCILLE ARNESON (One-third of proceeds from any sales goes to the Aids Foundation.) Valencia Rose, 766 Valencia St. Reception May 5, 4-6 p.m.

MAY 6: Judy Levy and Allan Regenstreif lead a participatory WORKSHOP for heterosexual couples examining sex roles. Modern Times Bookstore, 968 Valencia St. 7:30 p.m. 282-9246

MAY 6: ETHNO ROCK from Santa Cruz. El Rio, 3158 Mission St. 4-8 p.m. 282-3325

MAY 12: AUTHOR RICHARD GEER will be on hand to sign his new book, *Star + Gate. Keys to the Kingdom*, at Star Magic, 4026A 24th St. 12-3 p.m.

MAY 12: 9th Annual HUMAN RACE—a run and walk-a-thon to raise funds for citywide non-profit and community service organizations. Picnics, tailgate parties and other group activities. Crissy Field near the S.F. Marina 982-8999 for details.

MAY 12: END OF THE WORLD'S FAIR—no spectators, only participants. Fantasy and festivities with art, music, dance and theater. Procession begins at UN Plaza and ends with carnival at Mission Dolores Park. 626-6048

MAY 12: WOMEN'S DANCE, benefit for S.F. Women's Switchboard, with Chevere, a women's Latin jazz dance band, and other special guests. The Farm, 1499 Potrero Ave. 8:30 p.m. 826-4290.



The boys of spring are shown in pick-up game action at Noe Courts.

Photo by Martin Klimak

MAY 18: Three visually stimulating FILMS by independent filmmakers Michael Snow, Ken Kobland, and Stan Lawder. Eye Gallery, 758 Valencia St. 8:30 p.m. 982-3227 or 835-3320.

MAY 18: "Journeys to Nicaragua," MUSIC and SLIDESHOW co-sponsored by LEGAL and Harvesters for Peace. Mission Cultural Center, 2868 Mission St. 7:30 p.m. 552-1492

MAY 18: Singers DEIDRA McCALLA and BLACKBERRY perform at a benefit to raise funds for Friends of Pat Norman for Supervisor. Artemis Cafe, 1199 Valencia St. 8 p.m. 929-7149

MAY 18: WENDY MILLER and ANDREA HASSIBA present a slideshow/discussion titled "A Look at Algeria and Tunisia" from the perspective of two Jewish/American women. VIDA Gallery, 3543 18th St. 7:30 p.m. 864-VIDA

MAY 19: NOE VALLEY NEIGHBORHOOD FAIR—contests, music, food, games, crafts, and general hoo-ha. James Lick Playground (25th and Castro) 826-2044

MAY 19: FAIR OAKS ST. ANNUAL FLEA MARKET. Fair Oaks between 21st and 26th Streets. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

MAY 19: Book party and presentation by SYDNEY CLEMENS, author of *The Sun's Not Broken, A Cloud's Just in the Way*—an account of how a teacher made a safe yet stimulating place for young children to learn. Modern Times Bookstore, 968 Valencia St. 8 p.m.

MAY 19: S.F. COMMUNITY CHORUS Variety Show and Raffle. Chorus members perform individually in all the performing arts. Community Music Center, 544 Capp St. 8 p.m. 647-6015

MAY 20: Special Noe Valley neighborhood gathering for PAT NDRMAN, community leader and supervisorial challenger. Free admission, coffee and cake. Carson-York Desserts, 1328 Castro St. 8-10 p.m. 641-8781 or 398-4605

MAY 20: BIG CITY—dance sounds for the urban world. El Rio, 3158 Mission St. 4-8 p.m. 282-3325

MAY 20: LISA MOSKOW in a concert of North Indian classical music and her own compositions on the sarod. Noe Valley Music series. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 7:30 p.m.

MAY 22: BENEFIT for the Endangered Species Alliance—live music, comedy and poetry. Patch County, 25th and Church Streets. 8:30 p.m.

MAY 27: TROPICAL NIGHTS salsa, samba, funk and jazz. El Rio, 3158 Mission St. 4-8 p.m. 282-3325

MAY 27 & 28: MEMORIAL DAY weekend blast—E. W. Wainwright, Bishop Norman Williams, Bay Area All Stars and others pay homage to jazz masters past and present. Bayones, 1052 Valencia St. 9 p.m. 282-2522

MAY 31: DOROTHY BRYANT, author of *Kin of Ata, Miss Giardino and Killing Wonder*, will read from her new book, *Myths to Lie By*, a collection of essays and stories. Old Wives Tales, 1009 Valencia St. 7:30 p.m. 821-4675

JUNE 5: "VISION AS VOICE," a creative writing workshop with Noe Valley poet Sally Abbott, begins. Tuesdays, 7-9:30 p.m. 648-7928

May, 1984

MAY 2-27: Recent abstract paintings by JANICE TAYLOR. Southern Exposure Gallery, 499 Alabama St. Reception May 4, 6-9 p.m.

MAY 3: First THURSDAY NIGHT late opening for 24th Street merchants. Many shops now open Thursday evenings to 9 p.m.

MAY 3-27: PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT featuring David Arnold, Laslo Vespiem and Elliott Ross. Eye Gallery, 758 Valencia St. Reception May 4, 7-10 p.m. 982-3227 or 666-2040

MAY 4-26: SAN FRANCISCO ENSEMBLE presents "Ceremony for Nuclear Survivors." Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 8:30 p.m. 552-5276

MAY 5: AUCTION to benefit Second Community School, alternative public school. St. Mary's Cathedral, Geary and Gough Streets. Noon. 647-5374

MAY 6: "From the Spirit" CELEBRATION at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Potluck brunch and reception for artists, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. "Spirit" program/variety show, 1 p.m. Film "Imogen," 2:45 p.m. 282-2317

MAY 9: FILMS. For preschool, 10 and 11 a.m., school age, 3:30 p.m. Mission Branch Library, 3359 24th St. 824-2810

MAY 9: BENEFIT READING for Fire in the Lake, a S.F. based collective of artists/activists producing an anthology of political poetry and art to benefit Amnesty International. Modern Times Bookstore, 968 Valencia St. 7:30 p.m. 282-9246

MAY 10-13: 20th annual BOOK SALE to benefit the S.F. Public Library. Over 10,000 popular paperbacks at 3 for \$1. Pier 3, Fort Mason. May 10, 5-8 p.m., May 11 & 12, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., May 13, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 558-3770



MOTHER'S DAY • MAY 13



Photo by Joel Abramson

Youth like to do graffiti, but they can also eradicate them. Last month kids from Jamestown Community Center, under the auspices of Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) and the police department, held a "Graffiti Paint-out" in a four-block area surrounding the center.

MAY 6: "WHEELS-A-THON"—fund-raiser to benefit the elderly in S.F. in celebration of National Occupational Therapy Week. Anyone with a set of wheels, however unusual, is welcome. Polo Field, Golden Gate Park. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 474-5930 or 673-8405.

MAY 10: LUNCH HOUR LOBBY for peace legislation—a nationwide drive to stop the arms race. Civic Center Plaza. 12-3 p.m.

MAY 11, 12: "The Tie That Binds," PLAY written and directed by Mary Booker about a black woman's outer turmoil and inner voices, with poet/actress Gwen Carmen among others. Bay View Opera House, Third & Palou Streets. 8 p.m.

MAY 12: 2nd Annual "Day in the Park" for LESBIAN MOTHERS. Elk Glen Meadow in Golden Gate Park. 12-5 p.m. 558-9628

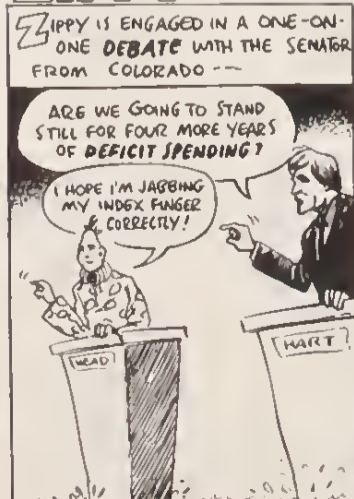
MAY 13: MOTHER'S DAY GARAGE SALE to benefit the "Tools for Peace in Nicaragua" campaign, sponsored by LEGAL (Lesbians and Gays Against Intervention in Latin America). Dolores Street between 17th and 18th. 821-4160

MAY 16: NATIONAL WRITERS UNION presents a panel discussion by editors of Bay Area fiction publications. Modern Times Bookstore, 968 Valencia St. 7:30 p.m. 641-8344

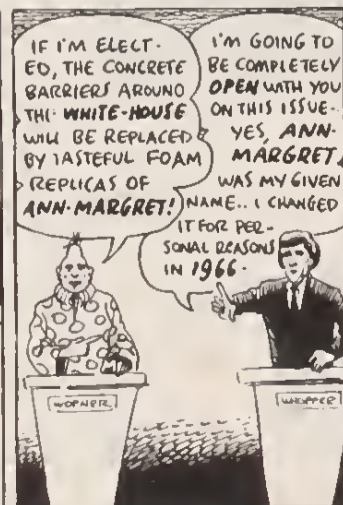
MAY 17: "Women in Prison. It Doesn't Make Sense," a multi-media presentation exploring alternatives to incarceration for women. Old Wives Tales, 1009 Valencia St. 7:30 p.m. 821-4675

MAY 17: MARK NAFTALIN with MISSISSIPPI JOHNNY WATERS (plus Bobby "Goodfingers" Murray). Bayones, 1052 Valencia St. 9 p.m. 282-2522

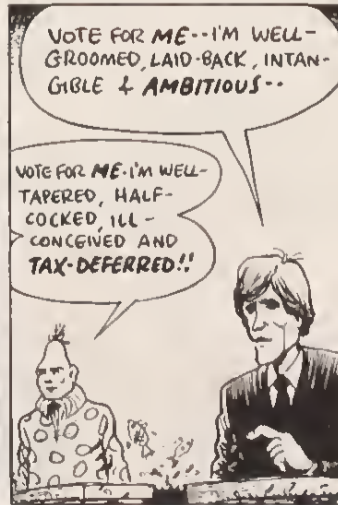
ZIPPY



"POLITICAL ANIMALS"



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The Scoop on CALENDAR

Please send Calendar items before the 15th day of the month preceding month of issue to the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Items are published on a space-available basis, with Noe Valley neighborhood events receiving priority.